

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 181503Z FEB 76

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1206

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 76

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION: ALLIANCE PARTY PROPOSAL
STIRS HOPE

REF: BELFAST 72

1. IN INTER-PARTY TALKS WITH UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COALITION (UUUC) ALLIANCE PARTY HAS SUGGESTED THREE-TIER SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT. AT TOP WOULD BE COUNCIL OF STATE, SIMILAR TO PRIVY COUNCIL. IT WOULD FUNCTION FOR LIFE OF FIRST PARLIAMENT, AND WOULD BE COMPOSED OF PARTY REPRESENTATIVES PROPORTIONAL TO THEIR STRENGTH IN LOCAL PARLIAMENT. COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES TO INCLUDE SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS. SECOND TIER WOULD BE CABINET FROM MAJORITY REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ALLOCATION FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS AND FOR "EXTERNAL AFFAIRS" INCLUDING (REPORTEDLY) RELATIONS WITH REPUBLIC OF IRELAND, EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND WESTMINSTER. THIRD TIER INVOLVES FORMATION ADVISORY COMMITTEES. CHAIRMEN WOULD HEAD RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENTS. ALLIANCE PROPOSAL, WHICH APPARENTLY LEAKED BY A PARTY LEADER, BEING CONSIDERED BY UUUC STEERING COMMITTEE. IT REPORTEDLY FAVORED BY RELATIVELY MODERATE OFFICIAL UNIONISTS. FIRST REACTION BY SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND UNCLASSIFIED

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LABOUR PARTY (SDLP) SPOKESMAN (DEVLIN) WAS NEGATIVE. DEVLIN SAW

FORMULA AS NOT IN CONFORMITY WITH WESTMINSTER GUIDELINES AND
LABELED IT ALLIANCE PUBLICITY STUNT.

2. VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS ARISING FROM FIANNA FAIL CONFERENCE
LAST WEEKEND HAVE AROUSED LITTLE REACTION IN NORTH. HOWEVER
TAKING OFF ON STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO PARTY LEADER JACK LYNCH,
HARRY WEST, UUUC HEAD, SAID AT RALLY LONDONDERRY FEB. 17
THAT SDLP SHOULD CONSIDER "OTHER POWER-SHARING PROPOSALS"
MADE BY UUUC. AGAIN DEVLIN, SPEAKING FOR SDLP, SAID HE
WELCOMED AND ACCEPTED THIS WEST INVITATION TO HOLD FURTHER
INTER-PARTY DISCUSSIONS.

3. ALLIANCE FORMULA CUMBERSOME AS IT IS JUST MIGHT WORK HERE.
LOYALIST ANTIPATHY TO CONTINUED DIRECT RULE HEIGHTENED IF
POSSIBLE BY CONTINUING VIOLENCE IN WHICH PROVISIONALS SEEM
ABLE PLANT BOMBS AT WILL. THERE SEEMS LITTLE IN ALLIANCE
PROPOSAL, AS REPORTED, TO WHICH LOYALISTS WOULD OBJECT. RECENT
EVENTS IN WHICH SDLP PERSONALITIES SUBJECT TO ATTACKS BLAMED ON
PROVISIONALS ARE CAUSING THEM RE-EVALUATE DESIRABILITY OF CONTINUED
DIRECT RULE AT LEAST IN SECURITY AREAS. ULSTER SUSPICIONS THAT
POST-CONVENTION DIRECT RULE WOULD BE LESS BENIGN AND MORE REMOTE
STRENGTHENED BY CONTROVERSY OVER ABSENCE FROM PROVINCE ALL
NORTHERN IRELAND MINISTERS LAST WEEKEND AND APPOINTMENT ENGLISH
OFFICE TO HEAD ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY. FRUSTRATION AND
DESPERATION PREVAILING POLITICAL MOODS IN PROVINCE NOW. LOYALISTS
FRUSTRATED BY INABILITY CHECK TERRORISM. MINORITY PARTIES
DESPERATE IN FACE LOYALIST REFUSAL TO AGREE TO CONSTITUTIONAL
FRAMEWORK THAT EVERYBODY GUEESSES WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO UK
GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT. BRIAN FAULKNER ENCAPSULATED FEELINGS
IN CALL FEB. 17 FOR REFERENDUM ON CONSTITUTION AND FOR GOVERNMENT
TO "DEMONSTRATE IN WORD AND DEED ITS UTTER DETERMINATION TO
THWART AND INDEED REMOVE FROM SOCIETY THE MEN OF VIOLENCE."
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